

ON WHITE CARNATIONS GIVEN  
ME FOR MY BIRTHDAY

**E**XQUISITE tufts of perfume and of light,  
Fair gifts of Summer unto Autumn borne,  
Were but the years ye calendar as white,  
As sweet, as you, Age could not be forlorn.

Yet, beauteous symbols of my only gain —  
Love, portioned from your givers' envied share;  
Honor, whose laurel at their feet hath lain —  
Make me this night of Life's waste unaware!

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

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THE ART OF SAYING NOTHING  
WELL

"La simplicité divine de la pensée et du style."

—*Paul Verlaine.*

**I**N OUR day, as it now flies, there are fine films of  
distinction to be considered, notably in literary art.

The merest gossamer of verbal indication must be  
respected in the behalf of style, lest a shade of meaning,  
no matter how vague, be lost from paragraph or phrase.  
The thing to be said is of no importance, we are told;  
but how it is said, that is the great matter.

If the title of the present paper be seriously studied it  
will prove puzzling to the average critic. It is a charm-  
ing sentence, rich in possibilities of meaning. The last  
two words, like the tail of a bee, bear honey and poison  
on the same spike, or in sacs close by. Which shall you  
receive, a sweet drop or an enraging prick? What, in-  
deed, does "saying nothing" mean? And nothing

well said, does that mean a well-said nothing? or shall we understand that anything has been poorly said?

Behold how easily a pen slips into hopeless obscurities of mere ink! I see that I am gone wool-gathering, and that my verbal distinctions just attempted do not distinguish. Was it Horace who said this?

"Non in caro nidore voluptas summa, sed in te ipso est."

The "precious smack," however, goes a long ways when there is nothing else to be had. The art of saying nothing well is the art of the bore or the art of the decadent, as you may interpret it. But a voice at my elbow quietly suggests that the distinction is still without a difference. The decadent, being always a bore, whether he has a precious smack or a smack of preciousness, has the art of saying nothing well and everything ill.

The good old days, when men who wrote were impressed with the value of original thought, were hard on brains, but easy on dictionaries. A tremendous idea was set for all time in a few words grabbed at random from a scant vocabulary. Even after "art for art's sake" had come to stay, the great early poets were stingy in their verbal dealings with art. It is surprising to note how meager is the vocabulary of Sappho, or of Theocritus, or of Pindar. And yet what incomparable riches of expression! The masters were in a flux of imagination, and to them a word had no value beyond its fitness to stand as a perfect sign of what the brain originated. But not so with us; we chase the word for the word's sake. We imagine that there is something precious in verbal style quite independent of what it may be used upon. A cheese, although rotten, is made sweet enough, we think, by being wrapped in an artistic poster.

We are quite familiar with the phrase "good litera-

ture," which has come to mean nothing and that wordy, or a good thing and that well written, according to the individual taste of the critic deciding the matter. But most generally we now take for granted that there is really nothing worth saying on account of its intrinsic value. As a new woman said of her kind the other day, "Oh, the female form is but a clothes-horse nowadays. A woman is suggested, not seen, by what she wears," we may well say of thought; it is a mere word-rack, a peg upon which to hang attractive diction. Not unfrequently the thought is quite dispensed with and the phrasing hangs upon nothing.

If you have nothing to write, of course write it well. Good literature, like Homer's and Chaucer's and Shakespeare's, was well enough before Theophile Gautier invented style, but since then there has come a change, and now we demand, not new matter, but always a new manner. As for durability, we are satisfied with a season's run; permanency is not desirable. Fame, which once was a thing to die for, has taken on the form of a spring jacket or summer cravat; you wear it till the next change in the weather. The art of saying nothing well is as fickle as the moon; for nothing and woman pride themselves upon varying their fashions; and what is good literature now but woman and nothing? Aminta and her George Meredith strut before us as if they owned the earth; but to-morrow there will be another woman and a new nothing.

The happiest literary folk in all the world must be those in Paris, who actually took Paul Verlaine seriously and are now making obeisance to Stéphane Mallarmé. They seem to be, if we leave out certain provençal dialect writers and our own American critics, the only litterateurs upon earth who would heroically die rather

than be right. M. Mallarmé expresses perfectly in a single phrase the whole ambition of his literary flock: "d'abord et toujours et irrésistiblement Verlaine." But how charming a thing literature is in the hands of these *poètes maudits*, as Verlaine styled them! To be sure, it is naught but nothing well said. Verlaine may have been right when he wrote his eulogy: "Absolus par l'imagination, absolus par l'expression, absolus comme les Reys Netos des meilleurs siècles;" there is much to be said about nothing, and more about such writers as Corbière, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, and Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, who have served to amuse a blasé crowd of the best fellows that ever lived, the Alexandrian Greek poets doubtfully excepted.

What Sir Walter Scott called "the big bow-wow" is not suited to the perfect expression of nothing. Browning's diction gets on better at a pinch, when the poet has to resort to a dazzling display of blank verbal cartridges; for sometimes it is almost impossible to distinguish a meaningless whiff of word-wind from a whizzing bullet of thought. We dodge with delight when either clips too near us. The other day I was auditing the book-bills of *Narcissus*, and found myself delicately and deliciously charmed by what under different circumstances would have been a mere lack of assets to back the paper. Style never went further nor came back with a more fragrant and savory load of nothing. From paragraph to paragraph one glides over a meandering smoothness. It is like bicycling on imaginary asphalt between immaterial clover fields. One hears bumblebees and sheep and kine; but never is there any visible or tangible matter of delectation: only a lulling composite noise; *vox et præterea nihil*. This voice of the hollow sphere and this dripping of melodious word-showers, to change

the figures, combine to high perfection in the latest good literature. Think of what a fascination a style can have, when a young girl fresh from Vassar flings down a volume by William Sharp, or one by I. Zangwill, and rapturously exclaims: "Shakespeare and Scott are not in it for a minute longer!" How delightful to do good that evil may come!

It would be hardly fair to wring into this paper a consideration of the art of writing nothing ill. Walt Whitman and Stephen Crane have given practical demonstrations of what may be done at a venture in that field. Here again my own style persists in obscurity. Nothing to write, and the poorest imaginable style, is not exactly the same with plenty to write and not a sentence ill written. The art of writing nothing and writing it ill might, however, be admirable in the hands of a master. For example, there is Andrew Lang's eulogy of H. Rider Haggard's stories, which I might cite in any part of this essay with perfect propriety and unqualified approval, as being strictly in point. When Mr. Lang has absolutely nothing for subject he is alluringly objective and revels in good literature. He is singularly expert in writing nothing ill.

But the art of writing nothing well, of writing so that nothing is well said, or whatever I mean, offers difficulties not readily foreseen by the ambitious candidate for authorhood. Nothing must ever be dressed up to look like a great something with an honorable ancestry and a congenital lease upon posterity, unless we accept the other interpretation of my caption. What could, on the other hand, be reasonably described as the bloomer costume style of writing, by which effeminate imaginings are made to masquerade as virile and of the major origin, demands serious and exhaustive study. To achieve it

William Watson has, we hope, a long life of self-reform before him; but some are born to it. Austin Dobson would not, apparently, give a penny to have it, albeit some of his best work neatly grazes the goal. Happy accident has done much on this score for Henry James, reading whose latest work one might exclaim with Mr. Sherburne Hardy: "But yet a woman!" And Mr. Howells should never go near a Shaker village if he has any regard for what old friends think of his style. It makes him say nothing with unusual delight.

When I get back to my Greek, as I usually do at the earliest moment, an essay like Aristotle's on poetry makes me wonder how it has lived so long and kept so well, seeing that it says something without regard, at any point, to "lightness of touch" or to preciousness of phrasing. It is not good literature, measured by the standard of Robert Louis Stevenson's style; but in its gnarls of diction are thoughts hard bound with fibers that are indestructible. Aristotle was too busy inside of his brain to have much respect for exterior frills; but where shall we find solidier phrases than he snatched out of his stinted vocabulary? It is tough reading, almost as bad as Browning's best, and the words grate together like teeth with sand between them; still, something is said. You remember his turns of diction by associating them with his thoughts; but you never dream of regarding him as a writer with a style-charm. His fascination comes from deep down, as if sent up by roots squeezed between boulders.

And it is true that a permanent fascination of style is always due to something more than nothing well said. The attempt has been made in American criticism to stow a poem like Poe's "Raven" away in the lumber garret as a mere word-trick; but there is something

tremendously human in the spiritual adumbration by which that great poem sustains itself. Style is there, superb styles and the clutch of grim sorrow, the pang of despair, and the helplessness of a soul in the presence of fate, are there as well. Poe could not command Stevenson's nimble diction, nor could he even understand what humor like Lowell's was. The power in his work came from behind his lines out of a wellspring hidden in a strange and original mind. He "played with dictionaries" and feigned abstruse learning; but he said new and impressive things in a new and impressive style.

The deepest truth connected with the permanency of art is that there must be style, which does not stand for the same thing as diction, nor for the same thing as characteristic stroke, manner or tone. Mere deftness with the brush, mere cleverness with the fiddle-bow, mere facility in the doing of word-jugglery, cannot pass into permanent art, and this is the lesson we need to-day. We take verbal style too seriously when we reckon with it as of more importance than fresh thought and enlarged ideals. It is not the art of saying nothing well that wins in the long run; it is the art of saying a great thing with a simple charm of style which does most to enrich literature. Indeed, great things are themselves simple, the greatest the simplest. Nothing is well said when nothing is said.

MAURICE THOMPSON.



## THE RED ROSE.

**W**HAT is that on your breast, my lady ?  
Burning — with lips apart ?  
“ Oh, that is a rose,  
The fairest that grows,  
And the thorn is in my heart.”

Why are its lips so red, my lady ?  
“ I for its sake have bled;  
My life-blood glows  
In the life of the rose;  
Therefore its lips are red.”

Why is its breath so sweet, my lady,  
Hastening my pulse's beat ?  
“ My deep love flows  
Through the lips of the rose;  
Therefore its breath is sweet.”

Why does it wither and die, my lady ?  
“ There is the stinging smart:  
The red rose dies,  
But forever lies  
That cruel thorn in my heart.”

ETHELWYN WETHERALD.







DRAWING BY TOM HARRIS

## A QUESTION OF ART

**"L**IST! good Mr. Johnson, to the proposition of Mr. Garrick. He says that I should be held accountable for the tameness in the acting of the part of a jealous woman by Miss Hoppner, who is to appear in the tragedy on Tuesday week."

It was Mrs. Margaret Woffington who spoke as she poured out a cup of tea for Mr. Samuel Johnson, whom she and Garrick, on returning to their house in Bow Street, after rehearsing the new tragedy at Drury Lane, had found waiting for them.

"I do not doubt, madam, that you should be held accountable for the jealousy of many good women in the town," said Mr. Johnson; "but it passes my knowledge by what sophistry your responsibility extends to any matter of art."

"Mrs. Woffington has not told you all, sir," said Garrick. "She is, as you may well suppose, the creature in the tragedy who is supposed to excite the bitter jealousy of another woman. Now, I submit that the playgoers, when they perceive that the woman who is meant to be stung to a point of madness through her jealousy of a rival, is scarce moved at all, will insensibly lay the blame upon her rival, saying that the powers of the actress were not equal to the task assigned to them by the part."

"And I maintain, sir, that a more ridiculous contention than yours could not be entertained by the most ignorant of men—nay, the most ignorant of actors, and to say so much, sir, is to say a great deal," cried Johnson. "I pray you, friend Davy, let no man know that I was once your teacher, if you formulate such foolishness as this; otherwise it would go hard with me in the world."

"Ah! sir, that last sentence shows that you are in perfect accord with the views which I have tried to express to you," said Garrick. "You are ready to maintain that the world will hold you accountable for whatever foolishness I may exhibit. The playgoers will, on the same principle, pronounce on the force of Mrs. Woffington's fascinations by the effect they have, not upon the playgoers themselves, but upon Miss Hoppner."

"Then the playgoers will show themselves to be the fools which I have always suspected them of being," said Johnson, recovering (somewhat ungracefully) from the effects of hastily swallowing his cup of tea.

"Ay, but how are we to fool them? that's the question, Mr. Johnson," said Peggy. "I have no mind to get the blame which should fall on the shoulders of Miss Hoppner. I would fain have the luxury of qualifying for blame by my own act."

"What! you mean, madam, that before receiving the punishment for sinning you would fain enjoy the pleasures of sin? That is, I fear, but indifferent morality," said Johnson, shaking his head and his body as well with even more than his accustomed vehemence.

"Look you here, Mrs. Woffington," said Garrick. "You are far too kindly to Miss Hoppner. That would not be bad of itself; but when it induces her to be kindly disposed to you, it cannot be tolerated. She is a poor fool, and so is unable to stab with proper violence one who has shown herself her friend."

"She cannot have lived in the world of fashion," remarked Johnson.

"Lord! Would you have me arouse the real passion in the good woman for the sake of the play?" cried Peggy.

"He would e'en degrade Nature by making her the

handmaid of Art. Sir, let me tell you this will not do, and there 's an end on 't," said Johnson.

"Then the play will be damned, sir," said Garrick.

"Let the play be damned, sir, rather than a woman's soul," shouted Johnson.

"Meantime you will have another cup of tea, Mr. Johnson," said Peggy, smiling with a witchery of that type which, exercised in later years, caused her visitor to make a resolution never to frequent the green-room of Drury Lane — a resolution which was possibly strengthened by the failure of his tragedy.

"Mrs. Woffington," said he, passing on his empty cup, "let me tell you that I account it a pity so excellent a brewer of tea should waste her time upon the stage. Any wench may learn to act, but the successful brewing of tea demands the exercise of such judgment as cannot be easily acquired. Briefly, the woman is effaced by the act of going on the stage, but the brewing of tea is a revelation of femininity."

He took three more cupfuls.

The tragedy of "Oriana" was by an unknown poet, but Garrick had come to the conclusion, after reading it, that it possessed sufficient merit to justify his producing it at Drury Lane. It abounded in that form of sentiment which found favour with playgoers in an age of artificiality, and its blank verse was strictly correct and impressive.

It contained an apostrophe to the Star of Love, and eulogies of Liberty, Virtue, Hope, and other abstractions, without which no eighteenth century tragedy was considered to be complete. Oriana was a Venetian lady of the early republican period. She was in love with one Orsino, a prince, and they exchanged sentiments in the first act, bearing generally upon the advan-

tages of first love, without touching upon its economic aspects.

Unhappily, however, Orsino allowed himself to be attracted in the direction of a lady named Francesca, who made up in worldly possessions for the absence of those cheerless sentiments which Oriana had at her fingers' ends, and the result was that Oriana ran her dagger into the heart of her rival, into the chest of her faithless lover, and into her own stays. The business was carried on by the sorrowing relations of the three, with the valuable assistance of the ghosts of the slain, who explained their relative positions with fluency and lucidity, and urged upon the survivors with considerable argumentative skill the advisability of foregoing the elaborate scheme of revenge which each side was hoping to carry on against the others from the date of the obsequies of the deceased.

The character of Oriana was being rehearsed by Miss Hoppner, an extremely handsome young woman, whom Garrick had met and engaged in the country, Mrs. Woffington being the fatally fascinating Francesca, and Garrick himself the Prince Orsino.

The tragedy had been in rehearsal for a fortnight, and it promised well, if the representative of the jealous woman could only be brought to "put a little life into the death scene"—the exhortation which the Irish actress of the part of Francesca put to her daily, but ineffectually.

Miss Hoppner neither looked the part of a tragically jealous woman, nor did the stabbing of her rival in anything like that whirlwind of passion with which Garrick, in spite of the limping of the blank verse of the poet, almost swept the rest of the company off the stage when endeavoring to explain to the actress what

her representation lacked, on the day after his chat with Mrs. Woffington on the same subject.

Poor Miss Hoppner took a long breath, and passed her hand across her eyes, as if to get rid of the effects of that horrible expression of deadly hate which Garrick's face had worn, as he had craned his head forward close to hers to show her how she should stab her rival—the slow movement of his body suggested the stealth of the leopard approaching its victim, and his delivery of the lines through his teeth more than suggested the hissing of a deadly snake in act to spring.

"Ay, do it that way, my dear madam," said Mrs. Woffington, "and the day after the tragedy is played you will be as famous as Mr. Garrick. 'Tis the simplest thing in the world."

"You have so unnerved me, sir, that I vow I have no head for my lines," said Miss Hoppner.

But when by the aid of the prompter the lines were recovered, and she had repeated the scene, the result showed very little improvement. Garrick grumbled, and Miss Hoppner was tearful, as they went to the wardrobe room to see the dresses which had just been made for the principal ladies.

Miss Hoppner's tears quickly dried when she was brought face to face with the gorgeous fabric which she was to wear. It was a pink satin, brocaded with white hawthorne, the stomacher trimmed with pearls. She saw that it was infinitely superior to the crimson stuff which had been assigned to Mrs. Woffington. She spoke rapturously of the brocade, and hurried with it in front of a mirror to see how it suited her style of beauty.

Mrs. Woffington watched her with a smile. A sudden thought seemed to strike her, and she gave a little

laugh. After a moment's hesitation she went behind the other actress and said :

"I am glad to see that you admire my dress, Miss Hoppner."

"Your dress?" said Miss Hoppner. "Oh, yes! That crimson stuff. 'Tis very becoming to you, I'm sure, Mrs. Woffington, though, for that matter, you look well in everything."

"'Tis you who are to wear the crimson one, my dear," said Peggy. "I have made up my mind that the one you hold in your hand is the most suitable one for me in the tragedy."

"Nay, madam; Mr. Garrick assigned this one to me, and I think 't will suit me very well."

"That is where Mr. Garrick made a mistake, child," said Peggy. "And I mean to repair his error. The choice of dresses lies with me, Miss Hoppner."

"I have yet to be made aware of that, madam," said Miss Hoppner. Her voice had a note of shrillness in it, and Garrick, who was standing apart, noticed that her colour had risen with her voice. He became greatly interested in these manifestations of a spirit beyond that which she had displayed when rehearsing the tragedy.

"The sooner you are made aware of it the better it will be for all concerned," said Mrs. Woffington, with a deadly smile.

"I shall make bold to assure you, madam, that I shall be instructed on this point by Mr. Garrick, and Mr. Garrick only," said the other, raising her chin an inch or two higher than she was wont, except under great provocation.

"I care not whom you make your instructor, provided that you receive the instruction," sneered Peggy.

"Mr. Garrick," cried Miss Hoppner, "I beg that

you will exercise your authority. You assigned me the brocade, did you not, sir?"

"And I affirm that the brocade will be more suitably worn by me, sir," said Peggy. "And I further affirm that I mean to wear it, Mr. Garrick."

"I would fain hope that the caprice of a vain woman will not be permitted to have force against every reasonable consideration," said Miss Hoppner, elevating her chin by another inch as she glanced out of the corners of her eyes in the direction of the other actress.

"That is all I ask for, madam, and as we are so agreed, I presume that you will hand me over the gown without demur."

"Yours is the caprice, madam, let me tell you. I have right on my side."

"And I shall have the brocade on mine by way of compensation, my dear lady."

"Ladies," cried Garrick, interposing, "I must beg of you not to embarrass me. 'Tis a small matter, this of dress, and one that should not make a disagreement between ladies of talent. If one is a good actress, one can move an audience without so paltry an auxiliary as a yard or two of silk."

"I will not pay Miss Hoppner so poor a compliment as would be implied by the suggestion that she needs the help of a silk brocade to eke out her resources as an actress," said Peggy.

"I ask not for compliments from Mrs. Woffington. The brocade was assigned to me, and ——"

"It would be ungenerous to take advantage of Mr. Garrick's error, madam."

"It was no error, Mrs. Woffington."

"What! You would let all the world know that



Mr. Garrick's opinion was that you stood in need of a showy gown to conceal the defects of your art?"

"You are insolent, Mrs. Woffington."

"Nay, nay, my dear ladies; let's have no more of this recrimination over a question of rags. It is unworthy of you," said Garrick.

"I feel that, sir; and so I mean to wear the brocade," said Mrs. Woffington. "Good Lord! Mr. Garrick, what were you thinking of when you assigned to the poor victim of the murderess in the tragedy the crimson robe which was plainly meant to be in keeping with the going intentions of her rival?"

"Surely I did not commit that mistake?" said Garrick. "Heavens! Where can my thoughts have been? Miss Hoppner, madam, I am greatly vexed——"

"Let her take her brocade," cried Miss Hoppner, looking with indignant eyes, first at the smiling Peggy and then at Garrick, who was acting the part of a distracted man to perfection. "Let her wear it and see if it will hide the shortcomings of her complexion from the eyes of the playgoers."

She walked away with a sniff before Peggy could deliver a reply, which she felt sure Peggy had ready.

"Pray what trick have you on your mind now?" asked Garrick, when he was alone with Peggy. "What was that caprice of yours?"

"Caprice? You are a fool, Davy. You even forget your own precepts, which your friend, Mr. Johnson, in his wisdom, condemned so heartily yesterday."

"Good Lord! You mean to——"

"I mean to make Miss Hoppner act the part of a jealous woman to perfection."

And she did so. The next day, at the rehearsal, Garrick, as well as every member of the company, was

amazed at the energy which Miss Hoppner contrived to impart to the scene in the play where, in the character of Oriana, she stabbed her successful rival. She acted with a force that had scarcely been surpassed by Garrick's reading of the scene for her instruction, the previous day.

"Faith, Peggy, you have given her a weapon for your own undoing," said Garrick, as he walked home with Mrs. Woffington. "She will eclipse you if you do not mind."

"I'll e'en run the risk," said Peggy.

Alas ! the next day, Miss Hoppner was as feeble as ever — nay, the stabbing scene had never been so feebly gone through by her, and Garrick grumbled loudly.

Miss Hoppner did not seem to mind. At the end of the rehearsal, she sought Peggy, and offered her her hand.

"Mrs. Woffington," she said, "I am desirous of asking your pardon for my curtness in the matter of the dress. I owe so much to your kindness, madam, I feel that my attempt to fix a quarrel upon you was the more base. Pray forgive an unhappy creature, who only seeks to retain the honour of your friendship."

"Ah, you goose!" said Peggy. "Why are you so foolish as to desire to make friends with me? You should have hated me — been ready to kill me — anything for the sake of becoming an actress."

"You will not refuse me the forgiveness which I implore?" said Miss Hoopner.

"Nay, nay; I was in the wrong; it was my caprice, but carried out solely on your behalf, child," said Peggy.

"On my behalf? Ah, you are quite right. I was beginning to forget myself — to forget that I was but a provincial actress."

"Ah, you poor good-natured creature!" cried Peggy. "I'll have to begin all over again."

They had reached the stage door by this time, and

were standing together in the long passage, when a tall and good-looking man was admitted, enquiring for Miss Hoppner. Peggy did not fail to notice the brightening of the colour of her companion as the gentleman advanced and took off his hat with a low bow. It was with a certain proprietary air that Miss Hoppner presented him to Peggy, by the name of Captain Joycelyn, of the Royal Scots.

"Captain Joycelyn is one of your warmest admirers, Mrs. Woffington," said Miss Hoppner.

"Sir, I am overwhelmed," said Mrs. Woffington, with a deep courtesy.

"Nay, madam, I am your servant, I swear," said the gentleman. "I have often longed for this honour, but it ever seemed out of my reach. We of the Royal Scots consider ourselves no mean judges of your art, and we agree that the play-houses, without Mrs. Woffington, would be lustreless."

"Ah, sir, you would still love Mrs. Clive," suggested Peggy.

"Mrs. Clive? You can afford to be generous, madam," laughed Captain Joycelyn.

"She is the most generous of women alive," said Miss Hoppner. "She will prove herself such if she talks with you here for five minutes. I was going away forgetting that I had to talk with the wardrobe mistress about my turban; I shall not be more than five minutes away."

"I protest it makes no demand upon my generosity to remain to listen to so graceful a critic, though I admit that I do so with a certain tremor, sir," said Peggy, with a charming assumption of the fluttered miss.

"A certain tremor? Why should you have a tremor, dear madam?" said the officer.

"Ah, 'tis the talk of the town that all hearts go down before the Royal Scots, as the King's enemies did in the Low Countries."

"An idle rumour, madam, I do assure you."

"I might have thought so up till now, but now — I think I would do wisely to retreat in order, Captain, while there is yet time."

She looked up in his face with a smile of matchless coquetry.

"Nay, madam, you shall not stir," said he, laughing.

"It is not the conqueror that should retreat. I am too conscientious a soldier to permit so gross a violation of the art of war. Seriously, why should you fly?"

"I am a poor strategist, but I have a sense of danger! Is Miss Hoppner a special friend of yours, sir?"

"A special friend? Well, we have been acquaintances of nigh half a year."

"I thought I had seen her by your side at Ranelagh. She looked very happy. I daresay I should be ashamed to confess it, but I envied her."

Peggy's eyes were turned upon the ground, with a demureness that represents the finest art of the coquette.

"You — you envied her?" cried the officer.

"How humble must be your aspirations, sweet creature. If I should not be thought to be over-bold, I would offer — ah, I fear that so brief an acquaintance-ship as ours does not warrant my presumption —"

"And yet you do not look like one who would be likely to give offence by your presumption, Captain."

"I should be sorry to do so, madam. Well, if you promise not to flout me, I will say that if you will accept my escort any night to the Gardens, you will do me great honour."

"Ah, sir, your graceful offer overwhelms me. But

alas ! all my evenings are not my own. I am free but this evening and to-morrow evening."

"Then why not come this evening, madam?"

"Why not, indeed? Only — is it not too sudden, Captain? Ah, the dash of the Royal Scots cannot be resisted."

At this moment Miss Hoppner returned, and Peggy cried to her:

"My dear child, your friend is Mercury — the messenger of the Elysian Fields; he has invited us to accompany him to Ranelagh to-night."

"Indeed! That is kind of him," said Miss Hoppner, without any great show of enthusiasm. "And you have accepted his invitation?"

"Ah! Who could refuse?" cried Peggy. She had not failed to notice Captain Joycelyn's little start at her assumption that Miss Hoppner was also to be of the party. "You will not mar our enjoyment by refusing to come, my dear?" she added.

"Nay, if 't is all settled, I will not hold aloof," said Miss Hoppner, brightening up somewhat.

They went out together, and before Peggy had parted from the others, the manner and the hour of their going had been arranged for.

They went up to the Gardens by boat. Their party numbered four, for Miss Hoppner had so pouted when left alone with Captain Joycelyn that he had promised to bring with him a brother officer to add symmetry to the party. But if she fancied that this gentleman, who was one Ensign Cardew, was to be the companion of Mrs. Woffington, she soon became sensible of her mistake. By some strange error which only Peggy could account for, the couples got parted in the crowds, Peggy and the Captain disappearing mysteriously, and only meeting the Ensign and his companion at supper time.

The merriment of Peggy at the supper, and the high spirits of Captain Joycelyn, who allowed himself to be spoon-fed by her with minced chicken, were powerless to disperse the cloud which hung over Miss Hoppner. She pouted at the supper, and pouted in the boat, and made only sarcastic replies to the exclamations of enjoyment addressed to her by the volatile Peggy.

The next day, before the rehearsal of the tragedy, Miss Hoppner said to Peggy, who was renewing her protestations of the enjoyment she had had on the previous evening:

"I think it right that you should know, Mrs. Woffington, that Captain Joycelyn had made a proposal of marriage to me, which I accepted."

"Good creature, what has that to do with me?" asked Peggy. "Captain Joycelyn certainly said nothing to me on that particular subject last night, and why should you do so now?"

"I am desirous of playing a fair game, madam," cried Miss Hoppner.

"And I am not desirous of playing any game, fair or otherwise," said Peggy. "Lord! Miss Hoppner, do you fancy 't is my duty to prevent the straying of the lovers of the ladies of Mr. Garrick's company? I vow I took upon me no such responsibility. I should have no time for my meals."

The woman whom she addressed looked at her with flashing eyes, her hands tightly clenched, and her teeth set, for some moments. Once her lips parted: she seemed about to speak; but with an evident struggle she restrained herself. Then the fierce light in her eyes flamed into scorn.

"Words were wasted on such a creature," she said in a whisper that had something of a hiss in its tone, as she walked away.

Peggy laughed somewhat stridently and cried :

"Excellently spoke, beyond doubt. The woman will be an actress yet."

Not a word of complaint had Garrick reason for uttering in regard to the rehearsal of the scene in the tragedy this day, and on the way homewards he remarked to Peggy, smilingly :

"Perhaps in the future, my dear Peggy, you will acknowledge that I know something of the art and methods of acting, though you did not hesitate to join with Mr. Johnson in calling my theories fantastic."

"Perhaps I may," said Peggy, quietly ; "but just now I protest I have some qualms."

"Qualms? Qualms? An actress with qualms!" cried Garrick. "What a comedy could be written on that basis! The actress with qualms, or letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would!' Pray, madam, do your qualms arise from the reflection that you have contributed to the success of a sister actress?"

"The tragedy has not yet been played," said Peggy. "'T were best not to talk of the success of an actress in a play until the play has been played."

That night Mrs. Woffington occupied a box in the theater, and by her side was Captain Joycelyn. Miss Hoppner was in a box opposite, and by her side was her mother.

The next day Peggy greeted her quite pleasantly, as she came upon the stage to rehearse the tragedy; but she returned the greeting with a glance of scorn far more fierce than any which, in the character of Oriana, she had yet cast at her rival in the scenes of the play.

Peggy's mocking face, and the merry laugh in which she indulged, did not cause the other to abate any of her fierceness; but when the great scene was rehearsed for

the last time previous to the performance, Mrs. Woffington became aware of the fact that not only was Miss Hopper's representation of the passionate jealousy of the one woman real, but her own expression of the face on the part of the other woman when she saw the flash of the dagger was also real. With an involuntary cry she shrank back before the wild eyes of the actress, who approached her with the stealthy movement of a panther measuring its distance for a spring at the throat of its victim.

Garrick complimented both ladies at the close of the scene, but they both seemed too overcome to acknowledge his compliments.

"By my soul, Peggy," said Garrick when they met at the house in Bow Street, "you have profited as much by your teaching of that woman as she has. The expression upon your face to-day as she approached you gave even me a thrill. The climax needed such a cry as you uttered, though that fool of a poet did not provide for it."

She did not respond until some moments had passed, and then she merely said:

"Where are we to end, Davy, if we are to bring real and not simulated passion to our aid at the theater? Heavens! sir, we shall be in a pretty muddle presently. Are we to cultivate our hates and our jealousies and our affections for the sake of exhibiting them in turn?"

"'T would not be convenient to do so," said Garrick. "Still, you have seen how much can be done by an exhibition of the real and not the simulated passion."

"Depend upon it, sir, if you introduce the real passions into the acting of a tragedy, you shall have a real, and not a simulated, tragedy on the stage."

"Psha! that is the thought of a woman," said Garrick. "A woman seeks to carry an idea to its furthest



limits; she will not be content to accept it with its reasonable limitations."

"And being a woman, 't is my misfortune to think as a woman," said Mrs. Woffington.

The theatre was crowded on the evening when "Oriana" appeared for the first time on the bills. Garrick had many friends, and so also had Margaret Woffington. The appearance of either of the two in a new character was sufficient to fill the theatre; but in "Oriana" they were both appearing, and the interest of playgoers had been further stimulated by the rumours which had been circulated respecting the ability of the new actress whom Garrick had brought from the country.

When the company assembled in the green-room, Garrick gave all his attention to Miss Hoppner. He saw how terribly nervous she was. Not for a moment could she remain seated. She paced the room excitedly, every now and again casting a furtive glance in the direction of Mrs. Woffington, who was laughing with Macklin in a corner.

"You have no cause for trepidation, my dear lady," said Garrick to Miss Hoppner. "Your charm of person will make you a speedy favourite with the playgoers, and if you act the stabbing scene as faithfully as you did at the last two rehearsals your success will be assured."

"I can but do my best, sir," said the actress. "I think you will find that I shall act the stabbing scene with great effect."

"I do not doubt it," said Garrick. "Your own friends in the boxes will be gratified."

"I have no friends in the boxes, sir," said the actress.

"Nay, surely I heard of at least one—a certain officer in the Royal Scots," whispered Garrick.

"I know of none such, sir," replied the actress, fixing her eyes, half-closed, upon Peg Woffington, who was making a jest at Macklin's expense for the members of the company in her neighbourhood.

"Surely I heard—" continued Garrick, but suddenly checked himself. "Ah, I recalled now what I heard," he resumed in a low tone. "Alas! Peggy is a sad coquette, but I doubt not that the story of your conquests will ring through the town after to-night."

She did not seem to hear him. Her eyes were fixed upon Peggy Woffington, and in another moment the signal came that the curtain was ready to rise.

Garrick and Macklin went on the stage together, the former smiling in a self-satisfied way.

"I think I have made it certain that she will startle the house in at least one scene," he whispered to Macklin.

"Ah, that is why Peggy is so boisterous," said Macklin. "'T is only when she is over-nervous that she becomes boisterous. Peggy is beginning to feel that she may have a rival.

But if Peggy was nervous, she certainly did not suggest it by her acting. She had not many opportunities for displaying her comedy powers in the play, but she contrived to impart a few touches of humour to the love scenes in the first act, which brightened up the gloom of the tragedy, and raised the spirits of the audience in some measure. Her mature style contrasted very effectively with the efforts of Miss Hoppner, who showed herself to be excessively nervous, and thereby secured at once the sympathies of the house. It was doubtful which of the two obtained the larger share of applause.

At the end of the act Captain Joycelyn was waiting at the back of the stage to compliment Peggy upon her acting. Miss Hoppner brushed past them on her way to her dressing-room, without deigning to recognise either.

Curiously enough in the next act the position of the two actresses seemed to be reversed. It was Mrs. Woffington who was nervous, whereas Miss Hoppner was thoroughly self-possessed.

"What in the world has come over you, my dear?" asked Garrick, when Peggy had made an exit so rapidly as to cause the latter half of one of her lines to be quite inaudible.

"God knows what it is," said Peggy. "I have felt all through the act as if I were going to break down — as if I wanted to run away from an impending calamity. By heavens, sir, I feel as if the tragedy were real and not simulated."

"Psha! You are but a woman after all," said Garrick.

"I fear that is the truth," said she. "Good God! that woman seems to have changed places with me. She is speaking her lines as if she had been acting in London for years. She is doing what she pleases with the house."

Garrick had to leave her to go through his great scene with the Oriana of the play, and Mrs. Woffington watched as if spell-bound the marvellous variety of his emotional expression as, in the character of the Prince Orsino, he confessed to Oriana that he no longer loved her, but that he had given his heart to Francesca. She saw the gleam in the eyes of the actress of the part of the jealous woman, as she denounced the perfidy of her lover and bade him leave her presence. Then came Francesca's long soliloquy, in which she swore that the

Prince should never taste the happiness which he sought at her expense.

“I have a heart for murder, murder, murder !

My blood now surges like an angry sea,

Eager to grapple with its struggling prey,

And strangle it as I shall strangle her.

With these hands hungering for her shapely throat,

The throat on which these kisses have been flung.

Give her to me, just God, give her to me,

But for the time it takes to close my hand

Thus, and if justice reign supreme above,

The traitress shall come hither to her doom.

(*Aside*)

[*Enter FRANCESCA.*

“My prayer is answered. It is Jove’s decree.”

So the passage ran, and it was delivered by the actress with a fervour that thrilled the house.

After her aside, Oriana turned, according to the stage directions, to Francesca with a smile. In Miss Hoppner’s eyes there was a light of triumph — or gratified revenge, and before it Margaret Woffington quailed. She gave a frightened glance around, as if looking for a way of escape ; there was a little pause, and then upon the silence of the house there fell the half-hissed words of Oriana as she craned her head forward, facing her rival :

“Thou thinkest to ride to triumph o’er my corse —

The corse which his indecent feet have spurned

Into the dust. But there’s a God above !

I tell thee, traitress, ’t is not I shall lie

For vulture-beaks to rend — but thou — thou — thou !

Traitress abhorred, this knife shall find thy heart !”

“My God ! the dagger — it is real !” shrieked Peggy ; but before she could turn to fly, the other had sprung upon her, throwing her partly over a couch, and holding her by the throat, while she stabbed her twice.

A hoarse cry came from Peg Woffington, and then she rolled off the couch and fell limply to the stage, her arms rapping helplessly on the boards as she fell.

The other actress stood over her for a moment with a smile, then she looked strangely at the dagger which glistened in her hand. Then, with a hysterical cry, she flung the dagger from her, and fell back.

The curtain went down upon the roar of applause that swept from every part of the theatre. But, though the applause was maintained, neither of the actresses responded to the call. Several minutes had passed before Garrick himself appeared, and made a sign that he wished to speak. When the house became silent, he explained to his patrons that both actresses had swooned through the great demands which the scene had made upon them, and would be unable to appear for the rest of the evening. Under these melancholy circumstances, he hoped that no objection would be made to the bringing on of the burletta immediately.

The audience seemed satisfied to forego the enjoyment of the ghost scenes of the tragedy, and the burletta was proceeded with.

It was not thought advisable to let the audience know that Mrs. Woffington was lying on a couch in her dressing-room, while a surgeon was binding up a wound made in her side by the dagger used by the other actress. It was not until Garrick had examined the weapon that he perceived it was not a stage blade, but a real one, which had been used by Miss Hoppner. Fortunately, however, the point had been turned aside by the steel in Peg Woffington's stays, so that it had only inflicted a flesh wound.

In the course of a couple of hours, Peggy had recovered consciousness, and though very weak, was still able

to make an effort to captivate the surgeon with her witty allusions to the privileges incidental to his profession. She was so engaged when Garrick entered the room, and told her that Miss Hoppner was weeping outside the door, but that he had given orders that she was not to be admitted.

"Why should the poor girl not be admitted?" cried Peggy. "Should such an accident as that which happened be treated as though it were a murder? Send her in the room, sir, and leave us alone together."

Garrick protested, but Peggy insisted on having her own way, and the moment Miss Hoppner was permitted to enter, she flung herself on her knees at the side of the couch, weeping upon the hand that Peggy gave to her.

\* \* \* \* \*

When Garrick entered with Captain Joycelyn a short time afterward, Peggy would not allow him to remain in the room. The Captain remained, however, for some minutes, and when he left Miss Hoppner was on his arm. They crossed the stage together, and that was the last time she entered that or any other stage, for Captain Joycelyn married her within a month.

"Ah, friend Davy," said Peggy to Garrick, "there was, after all, some sense in what Mr. Johnson said: 'We actors are, doubtless, great folk; but 't were presumptuous to turn Nature into the handmaid of Art.' I have tried it, sir, and was only saved from disaster by the excellence of the art of my stays-maker. Nay, the stage is not Nature—it is but Nature seen on the surface of a mirror, and even then I protest, only when David Garrick is to the front, and Shakespeare's the poet."

F. FRANKFORT MOORE.



## QUESTION

My weapon is exceeding keen  
Of which I think I well may boast  
And I 'll encounter Colonel Green  
Together with his mighty host  
With me they could not then compare  
I conquer them both great and small  
Tho' thousands stood before me there  
I stood and got no harm at all

## ANSWER

A man mowing of Grass with a Scyth, which took all  
before it.

From "The True Trial of Understanding."

## THE DROWSING ROAD

THE Drowsing Road is a shaded lane  
Descending down to the Slumber-land;  
It turns and twists and it turns again  
Across the Reverie Hills that stand  
Around the depths where the valleys lie,—  
The silent plains where a vapor teems,  
Too dense for vision, excepting by  
The glimmering lightning-flash of dreams.

A haze on Drowsing forever hides  
Unwelcome shapes from the weary eye,  
But spots where beauty or grace abides  
In sunbeams smile as I wander by;  
And clear as crystal in Drowsing air  
I see a figure of queenly grace,  
For Drowsing crosses a hillock where  
My love and I have a trysting-place.

The Drowsing Road is the only place  
My sweetheart ever appears to me.  
With smiles enwreathing her gentle face,  
We stroll together as I and she  
Recall the love of a distant day,—  
Her words caress as I kiss her hand,  
Then mists arise and I lose my way  
In drifts of fog from the Slumber-land.

LAYTON BREWER.





## THE BUREAU OF LITERARY REVISION

OUR beloved friend Charles Lamb once wrote of his *Essays of Elia* :

"One of these professors, on my complaining that these little sketches of mine were anything but methodical, and that I was unable to make them otherwise, kindly offered to instruct me on the method by which the young gentlemen in his seminary were taught to compose English themes."

When, with the solemn thoughts brought to each soul at the "turn of the year," we recount to ourselves our many mercies, let us never fail to remember with gratitude that the magnanimous offer of that seminary professor was never accepted.

We do not have to wait to-day for chance offers from solemn professors of instruction and revision in literary composition ; "the method by which young gentlemen in the seminary are taught to compose" is thrust upon us at every hand. "Bureaus of revision" and "Offices of literary criticism" abound and thrive and become opulent through examining, correcting and revising the work of confiding authors. We are told with pride that in one bureau alone three thousand manuscripts a year were thus revised. Among those three thousand young fledgelings of authors there may *not* have been a Charles Lamb, but the lamentable thought also will arise that there *may* have been a Charles Lamb, and that his unmethodical little "sketches" may have been pruned or amplified, or arranged and revised till they proved true "English themes."

There is a wearying monotony in the make-up of many of our periodicals, some of those even of large

circulation. There is a lack of literary color, a precise and proper formation of each sentence, and a regularity of ensemble which is certainly grammatical but is fully as uninteresting as grammar. A surfeit of these exactly formal "English themes" has made the gasping public turn to some of our literary freaks and comets with a sensation as if seeking an inspiration of fresh air after mental smothering.

I attribute this too frequent monotony, and even stultification of composition, to the "literary reviser"—the trail of the serpent is over all our press.

And what does this literary revision offer for the large fees paid? One alleged benefit is the correction of punctuation. It certainly performs this service; but the editor and proofreader in any responsible publishing-house will, as a duty, correct with precision the punctuation of any paper or book printed by the house. A benefit alleged by one circular is "a pruning of too riotous imagination." I groaned aloud as I read this threat. Too riotous imagination to-day! when we long for imagination and long in vain; when a wooden realism thrusts its angular outlines in our faces from every printed page. "To curb the use of adjectives," is another of the reviser's duties. The meager style too often seen of late may arise from this curbing.

The most astonishing aspect of this bureau of revision is shown in the patience with which authors endure its devastations. They confidently send into this machine the tenderly nourished children of their brains, dressed with natural affection in all the frills and ruffles of rhetoric, and receive them home again with ornaments torn away, laid in a strait jacket which has been cut with rigid uniformity, and made with mathematical precision—and

yet they kiss the rod that turned the natural children of their brains into wretched little automatons.

I would not judge all revision bureaus by one; but I must give my experience at the hands of a very reputable one. I had written four books of more than average sale, and had been ever commended by the press for my grammatical construction, when I sent to a bureau for criticism a short magazine-paper. It was returned to me full of very large and legible corrections—or rather alterations such as these: Where I wrote of my heroine being *dressed in*, etc., my reviser placed *gowned in*; where I wrote *the little child*, the reviser altered to *the young babe*; where I said *nothing happened after this*, to my horror, in heroic blue-penciled letters, I read my pet aversion, *nothing transpired*. Where a compound sentence contained several clauses with verbs in the past tense, all dependent clauses were made participial in form; not always to the advantage in elegance, never of moment or indeed of real difference in grammatical construction.

I must confess that I did not send to this bureau my real name, as palpably too well known to men of literary ilk. My three dollars' worth of advice was contained in a single sentence: "Your style is fair, but commonplace; if you practice literary composition you may succeed; but this article is, in our judgment, not salable."

I had the pleasure of sending the paper immediately to a well-known magazine and receiving therefrom in payment a check for fifty dollars.

A DEGENERATE.



## A NEW BALLAD OF TANNHÆUSER

“WHAT hardy, tattered wretch is that  
Who on our synod dares intrude ?”  
Pope Urban with his council sat ;  
And near the door Tannhæuser stood.

His eye with light unearthly gleamed ;  
His yellow hair hung round his head  
In elflocks lustreless : he seemed  
Like one new-risen from the dead.

“Hear’me, most Holy Father, tell  
The tale that burns my soul within.  
I stagger on the brink of hell :  
No voice but yours can shrive my sin.”

“Speak, sinner!”—“From my father’s house  
Lightly I stepped in haste for fame ;  
And hoped by deeds adventurous  
High on the world to carve my name.

“At early dawn I took my way ;  
My heart with peals of gladness rang ;  
Nor could I leave the woods all day,  
Because the birds so sweetly sang.

“But when the happy birds had gone  
To rest, and night with panic fears  
And blushes deep came stealing on,  
Another music thrilled my ears.

“I heard the evening wind serene  
And all the wandering waters sing  
The deep delight the day had been,  
The deep delight the night would bring.

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- " I heard the wayward earth express,  
In one long-drawn, melodious sigh,  
The rapture of the sun's caress,  
The passion of the brooding sky.
- " The air became a boundless flood  
Of music streaming overhead :  
A cry — a cry rose in my blood :  
I followed where the music led.
- " It led me to a mountain-chain  
Wherein, athwart the deepening gloom,  
High hung above the wooded plain,  
Appeared a summit like a tomb.
- " Aloft a giddy pathway wound  
That brought me to a darksome cave :  
I heard, undaunted, underground  
Wild winds and wilder voices rave.
- " And plunged into that stormy world :  
Cold hands assailed me impotent  
In the gross darkness ; serpents curled  
About my limbs ; but on I went.
- " The wild winds buffeted my face ;  
The wilder voices shrieked despair ;  
A stealthy step with mine kept pace,  
And subtle terror steeped the air.
- " But the sweet sound that throbbed on high  
Had left the upper world ; and still  
A cry rang in my blood — a cry !  
For, lo, far in the hollow hill

- “ The dulcet melody withdrawn  
Kept welling through the fierce uproar.  
As I have seen the molten dawn  
Across a swarthy tempest pour,
- “ So suddenly the magic note,  
Transformed to light, a glittering brand,  
Out of the storm and darkness smote  
A peaceful sky, a dewy land.
- “ I scarce could breathe, I might not stir,  
The while there came across the lea,  
With singing maidens after her  
A woman wonderful to see.
- “ Her face— her face was strong and sweet ;  
Her looks were loving prophecies ;  
She kissed my brow ; I kissed her feet —  
A woman wonderful to kiss.
- “ She took me to a place apart  
Where eglantine and roses wove  
A bower, and gave me all her heart —  
A woman wonderful to love.
- “ As I lay worshipping my bride,  
While rose-leaves in her bosom fell  
And dreams came sailing on a tide  
Of sleep, I heard a matin-bell.
- “ It beat my soul as with a rod  
Tingling with horror of my sin ;  
I thought of Christ, I thought of God,  
And of the fame I meant to win.

- " I rose ; I ran ; nor looked behind :  
The doleful voices shrieked despair  
In tones that pierced the crashing wind ;  
And subtle terror warped the air.
- " About my limbs the serpents curled ;  
The stealthy step with mine kept pace ;  
But soon I reached the upper world :  
I sought a priest ; I prayed for grace.
- " He said, ' Sad sinner, do you know  
What fiend this is, the baleful cause  
Of your dismay ? ' I loved her so  
I never asked her what she was.
- " He said, ' Perhaps not God above  
Can pardon such unheard-of ill :  
It was the pagan Queen of Love  
Who lured you to her haunted hill!
- " ' Each hour you spent with her was more  
Than a full year ! Only the Pope  
Can tell what heaven may have in store  
For one who seems past help and hope.'
- " Forthwith I took the way to Rome :  
I scarcely slept ; I scarcely ate :  
And hither quaking am I come,  
But resolute to know my fate.
- " Most Holy Father, save my soul. . . .  
Ah God ! again I hear the chime,  
Sweeter than liquid bells that toll  
Across a lake at vesper time. . . .

“ Her eyelids drop. . . I hear her sigh . . .  
The rose-leaves fall. . . She falls asleep. . .  
The cry rings in my blood — the cry  
That surges from the deepest deep.

“ No man was ever tempted so !  
I say not this in my defense. . .  
Help, Father, help ! or I must go !  
The dulcet music draws me hence ! ”

He knelt — he fell upon his face.  
Pope Urban said : “ The eternal cost  
Of guilt like yours eternal grace  
Dare not remit : your soul is lost.

“ When this dead staff I carry grows  
Again and blossoms, heavenly light  
May shine on you.” Tannhæuser rose :  
And all at once his face grew bright.

He saw the emerald leaves unfold,  
The emerald blossoms break and glance :  
They watched him, wondering to behold  
The rapture of his countenance.

The undivined, eternal God  
Looked on him from the highest heaven,  
And showed him by the budding rod  
There was no need to be forgiven.

He heard melodious voices call  
Across the world, an elfin shout ;  
And when he left the council-hall,  
It seemed a great light had gone out.



With anxious heart, with troubled brow,  
The Synod turned upon the Pope.  
They saw ; they cried : " A living bough!  
A miracle ! a pledge of hope ! "

And Urban trembling saw. " God's way  
Is not as man's," he said. " Alack !  
Forgive me, gracious Heaven, this day  
My sin of pride. Go, bring him back. "

But swift as thought Tannhæuser fled,  
And was not found. He scarcely slept ;  
He scarcely ate ; for overhead  
The ceaseless dulcet music kept

Wafting him on. And evermore  
The foliate staff he saw at Rome  
Pointed the way ; and the winds bore  
Sweet voices whispering him to come.

The air, a world-enfolding flood  
Of liquid music poured along ;  
And the wild cry within his blood  
Became at last a golden song.

" All day," he sang — " I feel, all day,  
The earth dilate beneath my feet ;  
I hear in fancy far away  
The tidal heart of ocean beat.

" My heart amasses as I run  
The depth of heaven's sapphire flower ;  
The resolute, enduring sun  
Fulfills my soul with splendid power.

“ I quiver with divine desire ;  
I clasp the stars ; my thoughts immerse  
Themselves in space ; like fire in fire  
I melt into the universe.

“ For I am running to my love :  
The eager roses burn below,  
Orion wheels his sword above,  
To guard the way God bids me go.”

At dusk he reached the mountain-chain,  
Wherein, athwart the deepening gloom,  
High hung above the wooded plain  
The Hörselberg rose like a tomb.

He plunged into the under-world ;  
Cold hands assailed him impotent  
In the gross darkness ; serpents curled  
About his limbs ; but on he went.

The wild winds buffeted his face ;  
The wilder voices shrieked despair ;  
A stealthy step with his kept pace ;  
And subtle terror steeped the air.

But once again the magic note,  
Transformed to light, a glittering brand,  
Out of the storm and darkness smote  
A peaceful sky, a dewy land.

And once again he might not stir,  
The while there came across the lea,  
With singing maidens after her,  
The Queen of Love so fair to see.

Her happy face was strong and sweet ;  
Her looks were loving prophecies ;  
She kissed his brow ; he kissed her feet —  
He kissed the ground her feet did kiss.

She took him to a place apart  
Where eglantine and roses wove  
A bower, and gave him all her heart !  
The Queen of Love, the Queen of Love.

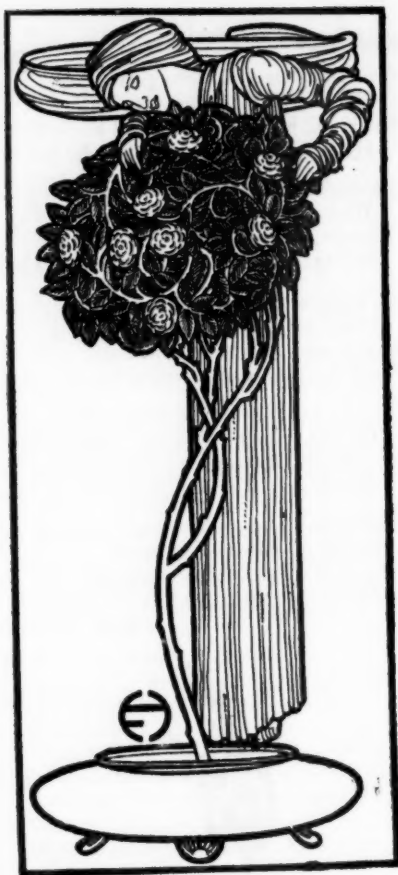
As he lay worshipping his bride  
While rose-leaves in her bosom fell,  
And dreams came sailing on a tide  
Of sleep, he heard a matin-bell.

“ Hark ! Let us leave the magic hill,”  
He said, “ and live on earth with men.”  
“ No ; here,” she said, “ we stay, until  
The Golden Age shall come again.”

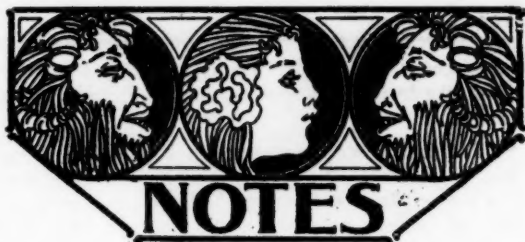
And so they wait, while empires sprung  
Of hatred thunder past above,  
Deep in the earth, forever young,  
Tannhäuser and the Queen of Love.

JOHN DAVIDSON.





THE ROSE TREE



¶The erudite person who conducts the department of book reviews in *Munsey's Magazine* has either been in the business but a short time or he has been curiously unobservant of literary events of the past few years. In a notice in the June issue he begins by informing us that Mr. Harold Frederic has made his *début* as a novelist with a book entitled "The Damnation of Theron Ware," and he goes on to say that "Mr. Frederic is favorably known to us by his foreign letters to the *New York Times*, and those who have followed his work closely will not be surprised to find in his first novel that he is entitled to high rank in literature."

It is a subject of no slight regret that even in a magazine where text is obviously subordinate to illustrations, where literature is but "letterpress" to the pictures, such pitiful ignorance should be tolerated.

It does seem as if any one of ordinary intelligence might know of Mr. Frederic's earlier works. It is hardly demanding too much to ask a man to remember "In the Valley," since it ran in *Scribner's Magazine* for nearly a year, and had no small success, or "Seth's Brother's Wife," or "The Lawton Girl," for both attracted attention on their appearance. And yet the literary editor of a magazine boasting hundreds of thousands of readers comes forth, and with condescending

complacency greets Mr. Frederic as a new novelist. Surely the decadence is upon us, and the Philistines speak truth.

¶ The popular song has seemed an impregnable stronghold of morality. No higher praise could be given than "a song of home and mother." Loyalty to woman and love of kindred, unselfishness and courage, have been celebrated in a thousand ephemeral ditties every year. Think of a few later songs: "I believe it, for my mother told me so;" "I'll stick to the ship, lads; you save your lives;" "Molly and I and the baby," etc. They have encouraged the student of humanity in moments of depression, and half persuaded him that after all the great public's heart was in the right place. Novels and problem plays might treat of marital infidelity, self-indulgence and cowardice, but they were only, so he told himself, for the upper classes; below in the ranks the sturdy common virtues survived. But now the trail of the serpent is over the popular song. There may be some who will think the fact of no moment, but to me it seems portentous that a new song already widely popular should contain a story of cheerful indifference to marriage vows. "Ma Onliest One," by Fay Templeton, is destined to be as widely known as "I Want yer, ma Honey." The singer in the first stanza is infatuated with Clorinda Johnson, a lovely "yaller gal," in the second he is married to her, while in the third he turns the very title of the song to ridicule. Another "yaller gal" comes to live in the same street, and the singer of the ballad, forgetting Clorinda, expresses himself forcibly if not elegantly, "I know it 's wrong, but, gee, I wants to own yer!" The sentiment is coincident with that of the hero of many a problem play, and it is the most horrifying proof of the degeneracy of the age which has yet been offered us.

¶ If the desire of the American public for English authors is as great as we are constantly being told it is, I think it passing strange that no one on this side brings out Emma Jane Worboise's novels.

The writings of this lady are little known here ; few Americans have even heard her name. I am sure I, for one, never did until the other day, when I saw in a London literary journal the welcome intelligence that a uniform edition of her collected works was preparing and would shortly be ready in thirty-eight volumes at three shillings and sixpence the volume.

We all long in vain for Kipling in a uniform edition, so it is grateful to have at any rate Emma Jane Worboise. It is to be regretted, however, that the publishers have not made the edition a complete one. An edition which contains *Thornycroft Hall*, *Millicent Kendrick*, *Violet Vaughan*, *The Fortunes of Cyril Denham*, *Lady Clarissa*, *Warleigh's Trust*, *Esther Wynne* and thirty-one other masterpieces should surely include *Maude Bolingbroke*, *Amy Wilton*, *Helen Bury*, *Our New House* ; or, *Keeping up Appearances*, *Married Life* and *Hearts Ease in the Family*, all of which are only to be had in the three-shilling edition. *Charles Eversley's Choice*, indeed, is not to be procured except in the cheap eighteen-pence form.

¶ Judged by some standards, Emma Jane Worboise may seem an exceptionally productive writer. But Mrs. George Corbett, if her health continues good, seems likely to eclipse Miss (or Mrs.) Worboise. It is true that she has only published twenty works so far, but the present year will do much toward bringing up her score. Two novels began serially early in the year, *The Prince Physician*, and *The Vindication of Olive Trevethick*. June has two more started, and before the year is out we shall have three more, and Mrs. Corbett will have made a

respectable showing of seven in one year. If a few more like Mrs. Corbett could be found I would suggest a novel-writing contest as a unique attraction for next season's parlor entertainments. Even now we might give Miss Adeline Sergeant the advantage of a small handicap and with Mrs. Corbett as scratch the match would be exciting.

¶[The portrait of Ibsen in 1860, which appeared in the May 15th issue, was taken from a new Parisian magazine entitled "*L'Aube*," to which credit should have been given.

¶[The newspapers of a day or two ago contained the following dispatch. Comment seems superfluous.

[SPECIAL CABLE BY JULIAN RALPH.]

London, June 23.—Among the passengers on the *Lucania*, which sailed for New York Saturday, are Mr. and Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont and Harold Vanderbilt, with a valet and two maids and Richard Watson Gilder.

